



## The Ehlers e-Newsletter

For the Week of March 22, 2004

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### *News from Congressman Ehlers ...*

**MICHIGAN CONGRESSIONAL REPUBLICANS CALL FOR ANSWERS ON STEEL** – Congressman Ehlers and other Republican members of Michigan's Congressional delegation are urging U.S. Commerce Secretary Donald Evans to investigate recent spikes in domestic steel prices that are hurting manufacturers throughout the nation, especially in Michigan.

*For more information, please read the press release on our website:*

[http://www.house.gov/apps/list/press/mi03\\_ehlers/031804steelprices.html](http://www.house.gov/apps/list/press/mi03_ehlers/031804steelprices.html)

### **THIS WEEK IN THE U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES MONDAY, MARCH 22, 2004**

*On Monday, the House will meet at 12 noon in a pro forma session.*

### **TUESDAY, MARCH 23, 2004**

*On Tuesday, the House will meet at 12:30 p.m. for morning hour and 2 p.m. for legislative business. Votes will be postponed until 6:30 p.m.*

#### **Suspensions (5 bills):**

*(Bills on suspension are generally considered non-controversial and have reduced debate time, but require a two-thirds majority vote to be passed.)*

- 1) H.R. 958 - Hydrographic Services Amendments of 2003:** Authorizes the establishment of regional navigation response teams, authorizes the use of volunteer services, provides a mechanism by which hydrographic products certified by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Administrator are accepted by international organizations, authorizes the Secretary of Commerce to acquire a hydrographic survey vessel, requires a report to Congress on progress made to depict the same shorelines on charts by NOAA and the U.S. Geological Survey, names a cove in Alaska in honor of the late Able Bodied Seaman Eric Steiner Koss (who was killed on a nautical charting mission), makes clarifying changes to the Hydrographic Services Panel established by the Hydrographic Services Improvement Act of 1998, and reauthorizes appropriations for fishery survey vessels in the Fisheries Survey Vessel Authorization Act of 2000 for fiscal years 2004-2006.

- 2) **H.R. 2408 - National Wildlife Refuge Volunteer Act of 2003:** Amends the Fish and Wildlife Act of 1956 to reauthorize volunteer programs and community partnerships for national wildlife refuges.
- 3) **H.R. 2489 - Cowlitz Indian Tribe Distribution of Judgment Funds Act:** Provides for the distribution of judgment funds to the Cowlitz Indian Tribe. The legislation will create a judgment distribution plan that follows the Indian Tribal Judgment Funds Use or Distribution Act, which dictates the manner in which funds can be utilized. More precisely, H.R. 2489 creates a specific plan under which the Secretary of the Interior sets aside specific percentages of the judgment funds for a multitude of uses for the tribe. These uses will include programs such as elderly assistance, scholarships, housing assistance, and economic development.
- 4) **H.R. 3926 - Organ Donation and Recovery Improvement Act:** Authorizes the Secretary of Health and Human Services to award grants to reimburse individuals for travel and subsistence expenses incurred when making a living organ donation. The legislation also provides the secretary with the authority to award grants to organ procurement organizations and hospitals to create organ donation coordinator positions to facilitate organ donation. The bill authorizes the secretary to evaluate the long-term health effects associated with living organ donors. The legislation directs the secretary to conduct a public awareness campaign and several studies on organ donation programs and policies. Finally, the bill amends the Public Health Service Act to strengthen organ donation programs.
- 5) **H.Res. 522 - Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that there is a critical need to increase awareness and education about heart disease and the risk factors of heart disease among women.**

### **WEDNESDAY AND THURSDAY, MARCH 24 AND 25, 2004**

*On Wednesday and Thursday, the House will meet at 10 a.m.*

#### **Suspensions (9 bills):**

- 1) **H.R. 1768 - Multidistrict Litigation Restoration Act of 2004:** Reverses the effects of a 1998 Supreme Court case (*Lexecon v. Milberg Weiss Bershad Hynes and Lerach, et al.*) that has inhibited the ability of the federal court system to adjudicate complex, multidistrict cases that are related by a common fact situation and legal issues. The bill allows any U.S. district court selected to handle these cases to oversee pre-trial as well as trial matters. In addition, H.R. 1768 functions as a technical correction to a disaster litigation statute enacted last term that confers original jurisdiction on U.S. district courts to adjudicate complex 'accident' cases in which at least 75 persons are killed.
- 2) **H.R. 3095 - Community Recognition Act of 2003:** Amends Section 7(m) of Title 4, United States Code, to ensure that the rules of etiquette for flying the flag of the United States do not preclude the flying of flags at half mast when ordered by city and local officials. Currently, if a local official seeks to honor a deceased current or former city official by flying the United States flag at half-staff, he or she must petition the President of the United States or the Governor of the state, who are the only parties that have the authority to order that the national flag be

flown at half-staff. This petitioning process can result in delays that prevent the proper recognition of these local heroes.

- 3) **H.R. 3786 - Bureau of Engraving and Printing Security Printing Act of 2004:** Authorizes the Secretary of the Treasury to produce currency, postage stamps, and other security documents for foreign governments (subject to a determination by the Secretary of State that such production is consistent with U.S. foreign policy) on a reimbursable basis.
- 4) **H.R. 2993 - District of Columbia and United States Territories Circulating Quarter Dollar Program Act:** Authorizes the Secretary of the Treasury to issue during 2009 redesigned quarter dollars commemorating the District of Columbia and the U.S. Territories (American Samoa, Guam, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands).
- 5) **H.R. 254 - To authorize the President of the United States to agree to certain amendments to the Agreement between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the United Mexican States concerning the establishment of a Border Environment Cooperation Commission and a North American Development Bank.**
- 6) **H.R. 3873 - Child Nutrition Improvement and Integrity Act:** Reauthorizes the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs, Child and Adult Care Food Program, After-School Snack Program, Summer Food Service Program, and the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) program, and makes common-sense reforms to improve services and strengthen the programs on behalf of disadvantaged children and families. The bill seeks to ensure the more than \$16 billion taxpayers invest annually in these programs is targeted effectively toward the health and nutritional needs of our nation's most vulnerable children and families.
- 7) **H.Con.Res. 328 - Recognizing and honoring the United States Armed Forces and supporting the designation of a National Military Appreciation Month.**
- 8) **H.R. 3059 - Lloyd L. Burke Post Office Designation Act (*Stuttgart, Arkansas*)**
- 9) **H.Con.Res. 189 - Celebrating the 50th anniversary of the International Geophysical Year (IGY) and supporting an International Geophysical Year-2 (IGY-2) in 2007-08:** Expresses that it is the sense of Congress that the president should endorse the concept of a worldwide International Geophysical Year (IGY-2) for the 2007-2008 timeframe. The resolution directs the Director of the National Science Foundation and the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, in association with the National Academy of Sciences and other relevant governmental and nongovernmental organizations, to initiate interagency and international inquiries and discussions that explore the opportunities for a worldwide IGY-2 in the 2007-2008 timeframe, emphasizing activities dedicated to global environmental research, education, and protection and submit to Congress at the earliest practical date, but no later than six months after the date of adoption of this resolution, a report detailing the steps taken in carrying out paragraphs (1) and (2), including descriptions of possible activities and organizational structures for an IGY-2 in 2007-2008.

**H.Con.Res. 393 - Concurrent Resolution on the Budget for FY 2005:** This resolution is the five-year budget blueprint that must be approved by Congress each year. The proposed budget provides \$2.4 trillion in total spending for fiscal year 2005 and totals \$13.1 trillion over fiscal years 2005-09. The deficit falls to \$377 billion in fiscal year 2005 and deficits decline each year, and the deficit is cut in half in four years. The budget assures there are no tax increases over the next five years. The resolution accommodates \$137.6 billion in revenue over the next five years to make permanent the expiring provisions of the 2001 and 2003 tax bills. The resolution also accommodates an additional \$15 billion in revenue for House-passed tax legislation that may come back to the House in a conference report (such as charitable choice).

**\* Possible Motions to go to Conference**

**\* Possible Motions to Instruct Conferees**

### **FRIDAY, MARCH 26, 2004**

*On Friday, no votes are expected in the House.*

#### **Historical Tidbits**

##### **On March 22 ...**

**1790** - Thomas Jefferson became the first U.S. Secretary of State.

**1794** - The U.S. Congress banned U.S. vessels from supplying slaves to other countries.

**1882** - The U.S. Congress outlawed polygamy.

**1933** - U.S. President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed a bill legalizing the sale and possession of beer and wine containing up to 3.2% alcohol.

**1972** - The U.S. Senate passed the Equal Rights Amendment. It was not ratified by the states.

**1988** - The Congress overrode U.S. President Reagan's veto of a sweeping civil rights bill.

##### **On March 23 ...**

**1775** - American revolutionary Patrick Henry declared, 'give me liberty, or give me death!'

**1806** - Explorers Lewis and Clark, reached the Pacific coast, and began their return journey to the east.

**1972** - The U.S. called a halt to the peace talks on Vietnam being held in Paris.

**1983** - U.S. President Reagan first proposed development of technology to intercept enemy missiles. The proposal became known as the Strategic Defense Initiative and 'Star Wars.'

**1998** - The U.S. Supreme Court ruled that term limits for state lawmakers were constitutional.

##### **On March 24 ...**

**1938** - The U.S. asked that all powers help refugees fleeing from the Nazis.

**1947** - The U.S. Congress proposed the limitation of the presidency to two terms.

**1989** - The U.S. decided to send humanitarian aid to the Contras.

**1995** - The U.S. House of Representatives passed a welfare reform package that made the most changes in social programs since the New Deal.

**On March 25 ...**

**1776** - The Continental Congress authorized a medal for General George Washington.

**1966** - The U.S. Supreme Court ruled that the 'poll tax' was unconstitutional.

**1994** - United States troops completed their withdrawal from Somalia.

**On March 26 ...**

**1804** - The U.S. Congress ordered the removal of Indians east of the Mississippi to Louisiana.

**1910** - The U.S. Congress passed an amendment to the 1907 Immigration Act that barred criminals, paupers, anarchists and carriers of disease from settling in the U.S.

**1962** - The U.S. Supreme Court supported the 1-man-1-vote apportionment of seats in the State Legislature.

*(Information from <http://www.on-this-day.com>)*